



Hegel and Napoleon Bonaparte, Jena, 1806

The Young Hegel and what drove him

Now that we have struggled with some of Hegel's own words, we may as well take advantage of some of Andy Blunden's illuminating scholarship. See the attached document, or the download linked below, for the first of Comrade Andy's set of ten lectures on Hegel, called by him "The young Hegel and what drove him".

Andy sketches the world of Hegel, corresponding in time with the first (English) Industrial Revolution, containing the Great French Revolution, and extending to the bourgeois military conquests of Napoleon Bonaparte. Hegel actually saw Bonaparte in the streets of Jena, Prussia, in 1806. Hegel admired Bonaparte, and called him "*The World Spirit on horseback*". "World Spirit" did not mean God.

Andy Blunden points out that in an age of liberals, Hegel was not a liberal. Andy's remarks correspond with Christopher Caudwell's "[On Liberty](#)", where Caudwell points out that men without institutions are mere brutes. (*"Unfortunately not only is man not good without institutions, he is not evil either. He is no man at all; he is neither good nor evil; he is an unconscious brute."* – *On Liberty*)

Andy Blunden says: *"There is some basis for associating Hegel with notions of progress and a 'cultural evolution' in which all the people of the world are subsumed into a single narrative"*. We must look to see if it is with Hegel that the idea of one human history, and "one race - the human race" arrives. In a work like Engels' "[Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State](#)", written a little over half a century after the death of Hegel, and indeed in the "Communist Manifesto" of 1848, the idea of a single human revolutionary history is strongly expressed.

Lastly, Andy Blunden introduces Hegel's "The Spirit". Read about it and leave it to bed down in the mind. But note this passage of Andy's (shortened):

"One of the difficulties that Hegel had to overcome was the problem of dualism... Kant's philosophy got around mind-matter dualism at the cost of introducing a host of other such dichotomies and it was the need to overcome these dichotomies in Kant's philosophy which was one of the main drivers for Kant's critics [including] Hegel. For

*Hegel, it was all thought. We will presently come to how Hegel arrived at **difference** from this abstract beginning, but the idea of thought, of Spirit, shaping the world, served as a foundation upon which to build a philosophical system... Thinking [is] the activity of the human mind, but the content of that thinking is objective, it is given from outside the individual, it is the individual's 'second nature'. The objects around us and which are the content of our perception and thoughts are the objectifications of the thought of other people, or ourselves. We live in a world not of matter, but of thought objects, which are, like all objects, also material things."*

Here is a hyperlinked list of main Works of Hegel in English:

The German Constitution, 1798-1802 (HPW) [Ø](#)

Introduction to *The Critical Journal of Philosophy*, with Schelling (1801) [Ø](#)

Faith & Knowledge (1802) [Ø](#)

System of Ethical Life (1802-3) [Ø](#)

Realphilosophie I (1803-4) & II (1805-6) [Ø](#)

Phenomenonology of Spirit (1807) [Ø](#)

The Science of Logic [Ø](#)

Part I: The Doctrine of Being (1812)

Part II: The Doctrine of Essence (1813)

Part III: The Doctrine of the Notion (1816)

Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences (1817 & revised up till his death in 1831)

Part I: The Logic [Ø](#)

Part II: The Philosophy of Nature [Ø](#)

Part III: The Philosophy of Mind

1 Subjective Spirit [Ø](#)

2 Objective Spirit [Ø](#)

3 Absolute Spirit

The Philosophy of Right, 1821 [Ø](#)

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [The Young Hegel and what drove him, 2007, Andy Blunden](#).
- To download any of the CU courses in PDF files [please click here](#).